

FARM AND RANCH IRRIGATION SURVEY FINAL PUSH NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Irrigation Survey Still Underway

[Lakewood, Colorado] – To aid in efforts to provide farmers with improved technology, more efficient water use practices, and sound programs and policies, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is conducting the Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey.

"This survey provides a single source of comprehensive, up-to-date information on irrigation and water use across the agricultural industry," said Bill Meyer, director the NASS Colorado Field Office. "By participating in this survey, farmers and ranchers have a voice in promoting the need for more efficient irrigation practices – practices that will help improve their bottom line and ensure the long-term sustainability of our nation's water resources."

For the first time the irrigation survey, which is a supplement to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, includes a focus on nursery and horticultural operations. Earlier this year the survey was mailed to over 750 Colorado producers. NASS will soon begin contacting producers who have not yet responded in order to collect information on their irrigation water use during 2008.

Producers will be asked questions about application methods, equipment, facilities, expenditures, crop acreage and yield. This information will be used by industry, government, and producers themselves, to help shape future irrigation policies, tools and technologies.

"Colorado farmers and ranchers who are looking for more efficient ways to irrigate their land and ways to reduce their expenses need to participate," added Meyer. "This survey is their voice, their future and their responsibility."

As is the case with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is protected by law. NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all responses, ensuring that no individual producer or operation can be identified.

For more information about the Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey, call (800) 727-9540 or visit www.agcensus.usda.gov.

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